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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that college-level geography instructors use novels to help students understand how people have interacted with particular environments within particular periods of time. In addition, it offers excerpts from approximately 20 novels that deal with topics often treated in human (cultural) geography courses. The author suggests that employing novels as a synthesis between change processes and geographical regions is a useful pedagogical device because it enables students to deal with explanation as well as description. The bulk of the paper centers around a topic which is of primary interest in many human geography courses--the cultural landscape. The cultural landscape is defined as that culture-specific milieu which results from the interaction of environmental influence upon human behavior and the reciprocal human influence upon the environment. The author categorizes the American cultural landscape into five primary types--the inner city, suburbia, rural, the small town, and the frontier--and then uses these typologies as a framework within which to discuss human phenomena in the context of change. Examples of topics discussed and the novels selected to illustrate them include, (1) social and psychological impact of technological change, exemplified in "The Octopus," Frank Norris and "The Jungle," Upton Sinclair; (2) the promise of opportunity in 19th century America, exemplified in "The Pit, A Story of Chicago," Frank Norris and "The Fortunate Pilgrim," Mario Puzo; (3) realities of life in small town America, exemplified in "Main Street," Sinclair Lewis and "Winesburg Ohio," Sherwood Anderson; and (4) the transformation of the American wilderness, exemplified in "My Antonia," Willa Cather. (DB)

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THE USE OF FICTIONAL LITERATURE IN TEACHING CONCEPTS OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

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THE USE OF FICTIONAL LITERATURE IN TEACHING CONCEPTS OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

Abstract: Historical geographers are interested in attributes of people and place as they evolve through time. The interaction of people with their environment generates a modification of their behavior which is reflected in the cultural landscape. Since this embodies evolution, there has to be a discussion of change process as a means of explaining the relationship between human behavior and the landscape as it exists in place within a temporal context. The novel provides an immeasurable aid whereby the cultural geographer can ascertain change processes that explain why a particular landscape emerged the way it did. The discussion of a cultural landscape has a certain aspect of sterility without the interjection of human perception. Perhaps it is analogous to the discussion of a stage setting without mentioning the subtleties of the characters. The value of the novel rests in its subjectivity, and its ability to transcend empiricism by offering an explanation of human phenomena from a humanistic point of view, a view that reflects the novelist's perception of the real world as she experiences it.

Introduction

This paper, offered within a pedagogical context, will discuss the applicability of employing novels as a means of teaching how people interact with a particular environment within a particular period of time.[1] It presupposes that the cultural landscape can be categorized into five primary types: the inner city, suburbia, rural, the small town, and the frontier. These landscape typologies serve

[1] A good source that provides an appropriate synthesis between fictional literature and geographical landscapes is: Christopher L. Salter and William J. Lloyd, Landscape in Literature (Resource Papers for College Geography No. 76-3), Washington: Association of American Geographers, 1977. The application of specific novels in the teaching

as a useful setting for the discussion of human phenomena in the context of change processes.

The relationship between the five landscape typologies and change processes is illustrated in Figure 1. A geographical region persists through time. Time implys a particular period in which there is human interaction with the land. This form of interaction suggests an environmental influence upon human behavior and a reciprocal influence upon the environment. The environment is a dynamic entity and the human component is dominated mentifactual components which engender decisions that ultimately determine particular modes of behavior. Change processes are elements of the cultural landscape that either circumscribe or liberate human behavior within the context of a particular place. Change processes are causative factors that account for a particular landscape in a particular time.

Employing the novel as a synthesis between change processes and cultural landscapes is a useful pedagogical device because it enables the student to deal with explanation as well as description. Whereas descriptive features are specific attributes, explanations are more in the realm of the abstract which demands reflection more than it does rote learning. The relevance of novels selected specifically for this paper to change processes and geographical landscapes is listed in Table 1.

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of cultural geography of the United States is discussed in: Sherman E. Silverman, "The Use of Novels in Teaching Cultural Geography of the United States," Journal of Geography, 76 (April/May, 1977), pp. 140-146. Two articles that discuss the relevance of literature to specific regions are: Ary J. Lamme III, "Literary Resources for Historical Geography," and Sherman E. Silverman, "Fictional Sources on Change Processes: An Example from The Yearling;" both in The Florida Geographer, 12 (January, 1978), pp. 11-16 and pp. 17-19 respectfully.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHANGE PROCESSES AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES IN PLACE THROUGH TIME

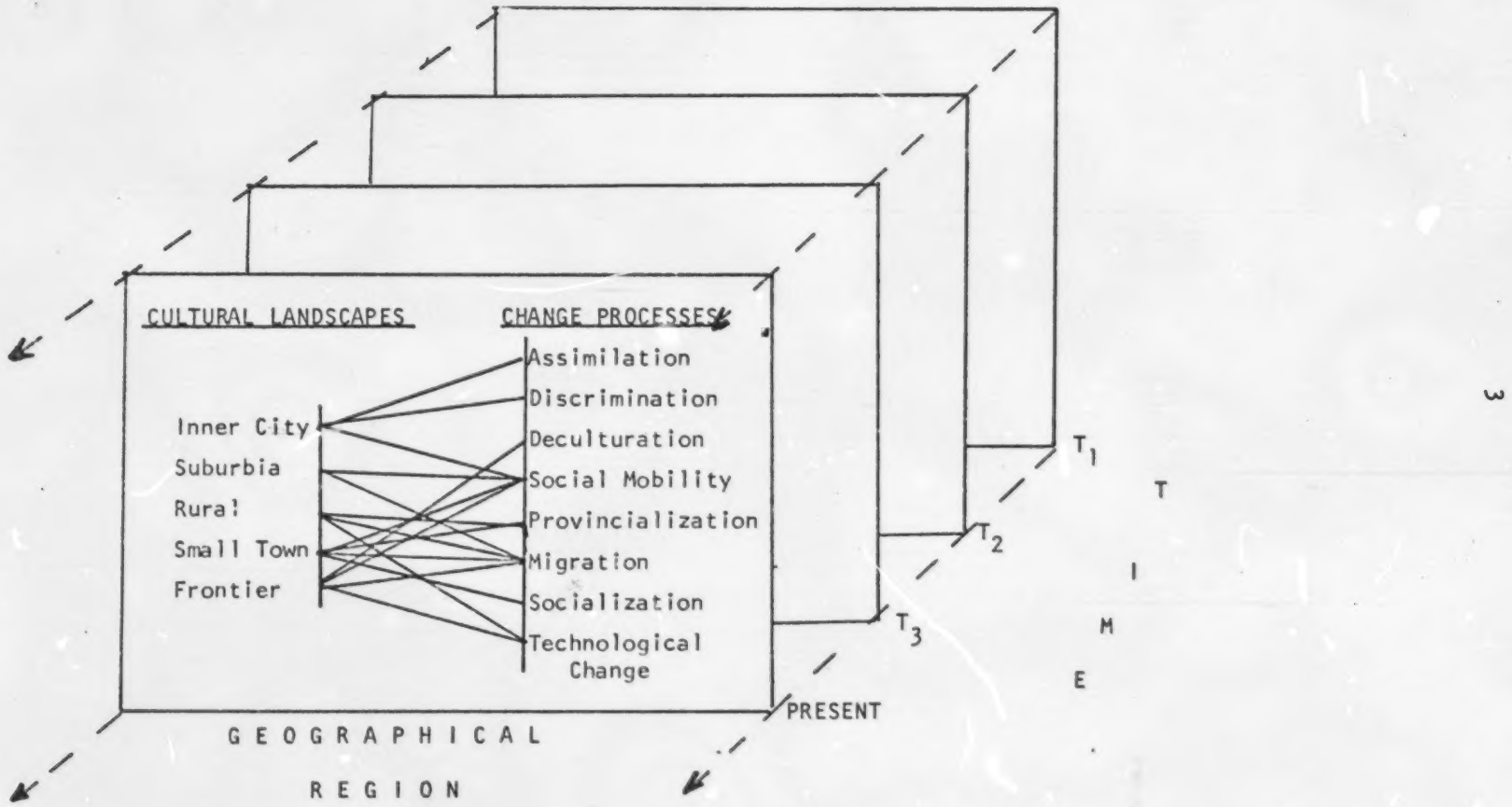


Fig. 1

TABLE 1

THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHANGE PROCESSES AND GEOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPES TO SELECTED FICTIONAL LITERATURE

LANDSCAPE	PROCESSES: ASSIMILATION	DECULTURALIZATION	DISCRIMINATION	MIGRATION	PROVINCIALIZATION	SOCIALIZATION	SOCIAL MOBILITY	TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE
INNER CITY	THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY THE FORTUNATE PILGRAM	THE JUNGLE	THE FIRE NEXT TIME NATIVE SON			WE FISHED ALL NIGHT STUDS LONIGAN	LOOKING BACKWARD MAJORIE MORNINGSTAR	THE TITAN THE PIT
SUBURBAN							GOODBYE COLUMBUS' BABBITT	
RURAL				GRAPES OF WRATH	TOBACCO ROAD	O PIONEERS!		THE OCTOPUS MY ANTONIA
SMALL TOWN					MAIN STREET THE HAMLET WINESBURG, OHIO	MAIN STREET		
FRONTIER		CIMARRON				MY ANTONIA	CIMARRON	CIMARRON O PIONEERS!

The Urban Network

The evolution of the urban network provides a generalized construct from which the five landscape typologies can be addressed. As illustrated in Figure 2, the urban network begins with initial settlement along a coast line forming a linear pattern. In time, subsistence will give way to surplus productivity and those coastal settlements that can achieve reasonably good connectivity with the interior will emerge as prosperous mercantile centers.

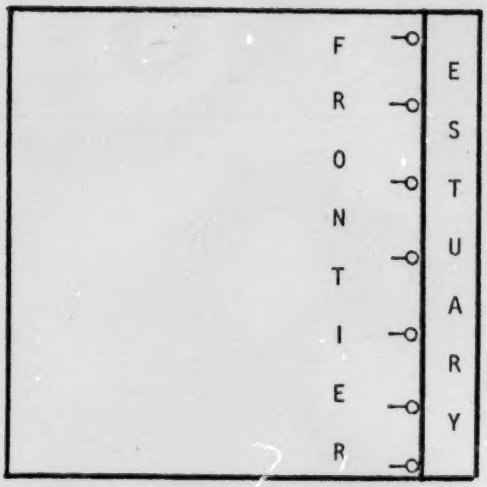
Technological innovation enhances the progression of migration towards the frontier. The mercantile citys along the coast will expand their economy by becoming industrial centers as well. Some interior settlements once dependent upon the coastal region will have extensive hinterlands of their own. As an intensive urban network emerges, regional differentiations will diminish. Patterns of migration will shift from the frontier, which disappears, to the city and the socioeconomic gap between the wealthy and the poor will be expanded.

The impact of technological change upon people has been vividly portrayed in several novels by using animals as the personification of human beings. In these examples, the animals are being callously slaughtered by technology.

> In some way the herd of sheep--Vanamee's herd--had found a breach in the wire fence by the right of way and had wandered out upon the tracks. A band had been crossing just at the moment of the engine's passage. The pathos of it was beyond expression. It was a slaughter, a massacre of innocents. The iron monster had charged full into the midst, merciless, inexorable. To the right and left, all the width of the right of way, the little bodies had

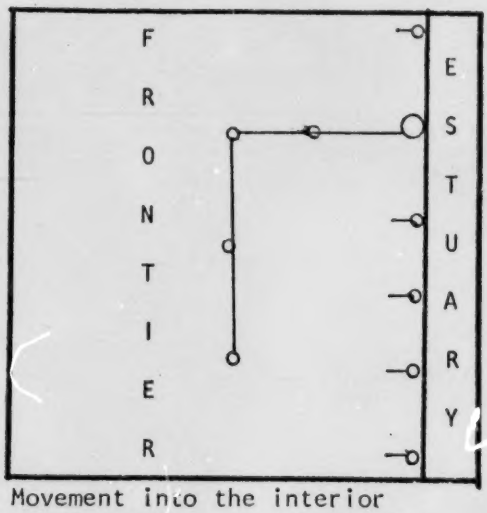
THE EVOLUTION OF AN URBAN NETWORK

INITIAL SETTLEMENT



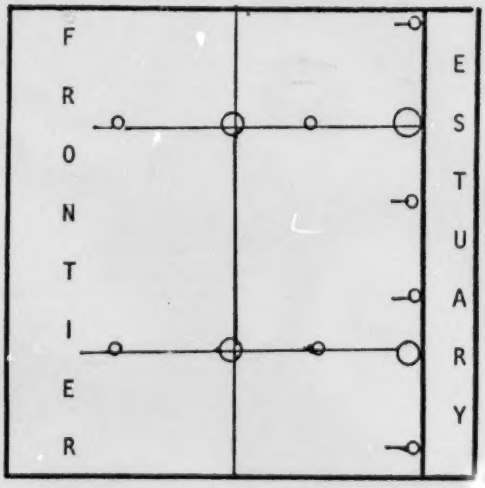
Implantation of small settlements in Tidewater Region. Subsistence economy quickly changes to commercial productivity. Penetration into the interior is slow.

EARLY EXPANSION



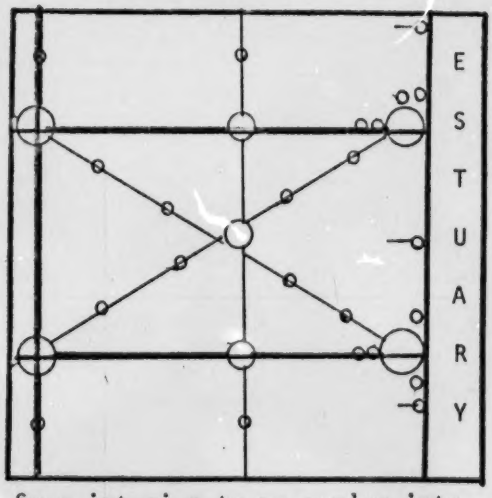
Movement into the interior accelerates. Complimentarity established with Tidewater entrepots. Interior towns become jumping off points for further penetration into the Frontier. Transferibility is low because of poor accessibility.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION



Transferability is increased because of technology. Railroads achieve economy of scale. Tidewater entrepots become competitive. Artisans decline as factories appear. Penetration into the interior accelerates.

INTERCONNECTING ROUTEWAYS



Some interior towns evolve into formidable citys as they establish connectivity with Tidewater centers. The Frontier disappears. Economic productivity in the interior has been intensified through the application of machinery.

been flung; backs were snapped against the fence posts; brains knocked out. Caught in the barbs of the wire, wedged in, the bodies hung suspended. Underfoot it was terrible. The black blood, winking in the starlight, seeped down into the clinkers between the ties with a prolonged sucking murmur.[2]

It was all so very businesslike that one watched it fascinated. It was pork-making by machinery, pork-making by applied mathematics. And yet somehow the most matter-of-fact person could not help thinking of the hogs; they were so innocent, they came so very trustingly; and they were very human in their protests--and so perfectly within their rights! They had done nothing to deserve it, and it was adding insult to injury, as the thing was done here, swinging them up in this cold-blooded, impersonal way, without a pretence at apology, without the homage of a tear. Now and then a visitor wept, to be sure; but this slaughtering maching ran on, visitors or no visitors. It was like some horrible crime committed in a dungeon, all unseen and unheeded, buried out of sight and of memory.[3]

And over the grass at the roadside a land turtle crawled, turning aside for nothing, dragging his high-domed shell over the grass: His hard legs and yellow-nailed feet threshed slowly through the grass, not really walking, but boosting and dragging his shell along. His horny beak was partly open, and his fierce, humorous eyes, under brows like fingernails, stared straight ahead. He came over the grass leaving a beaten trail behind him, and the hill, which was the highway embankment, reared up ahead of him. For a moment he stopped, his head held high. He blinked and looked up and down. At last he started to climb the embankment. Front clawed feet reached forward but did not touch. The hind feet kicked his shell along, and it scraped on the grass, and on the gravel. As the embankment grew steeper and steeper, the more frantic were the efforts of the land turtle. Pushing hind legs strained and slipped, boosting the shell along, and the horny head protruded as far as the neck could stretch. Little by little the shell slid up the embankment until at last a parapet cut straight across its line of march, the shoulder of the road, a concrete wall four inches high. As though they worked independently the hind legs pushed the shell against the wall. The head upraised and peered over the wall to the broad smooth plain of cement. Now the hands, braced on top of the wall, strained and lifted, and the shell came slowly

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[2]Frank Norris, The Octopus (New York: The New American Library, 1964, pp. 41-42.

[3]Upton Sinclair, The Jungle (New York: The New American Library, 1964, pp. 39-40.

> up and rested its front end on the wall. For a moment the turtle rested.[4]
>
> The rat's belly pulsed with fear. Bigger advanced a step and the rat emitted a long thin song of defiance, its black beady eyes glittering, its tiny forefeet pawing the air restlessly. Bigger swung the skillet; it skidded over the floor, missing the rat, and clattered to a stop against a wall.
>
> Bigger aimed and let the skillet fly with a heavy grunt. There was a shattering of wood as the box caved in. The woman screamed and hid her face in her hands. Bigger tip-toed forward and peered.
>
> "I got 'im," he muttered, his clenched teeth bared in a smile. "By God, I got 'im."[5]

Norris' sheep, Sinclair's hogs, Steinbeck's land turtle and Wright's rat all personify helpless individuals made prostrate before an indifferent society. A society whose collective conscience was giving way to the atomization of the individual as the process of technological change accelerated.

> Ah, these men of the city, what could women ever know of them, of their lives, of that other existence through which--freed from the influence of wife or mother, or daughter or sister--they passed every day from nin o'clock till evening? It was a life in which women had no part, and in which, should they enter it they would no longer recognise son or husband, or father or brother. The gentle-mannered fellow, clean-minded, clean-handed, of the breakfast or supper table was one man. The other, who and what was he? Down there in the murk and grime of the business district raged the Battle of the Street, and therein he was a being transformed, case hardened, supremely selfish, asking no quarter; no, nor giving any. Fouled with the clutchings and grapplings of the attack, besmirched with the elbowing of low associates and obscure allies, he set his feet toward conquest, and mingled with the marchings of an army that surged forever forward and back; now in merciless assault, beating the fallen enemy under foot, now in repulse, equally merciless, trampling down the auxiliaries of the day before, in a panic dash for

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[4]John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath (New York: Bantam Books, 1964), p. 12.

[5]Richard Wright, Native Son (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), pp. 9-10.

safety; always cruel, always selfish, always pitiless.[6]

> By way of attempting to give the reader some general impression of the way people lived together in those days, and especially of the relations of the rich and poor to one another, perhaps I cannot do better than to compare society as it then was to a prodigious coach which the masses of humanity were harnessed to and dragged toilsomely along a very hilly and sandy road. The driver was hunger, and permitted no lagging, though the pace was necessarily very slow. Despite the difficulty of drawing the coach at all along so hard a road, the top was covered with passengers who never got down, even at the steepest ascents. These seats on top were very breezy and comfortable. Well up out of the dust, their occupants could enjoy the scenery at their leisure, or critically discuss the merits of the straining team. Naturally such places were in great demand and the competition for them was keen, every one seeking as the first end in life to secure a seat on the coach for himself and to leave it to his child after him. By the rule of the coach a man could leave his seat to whom he wished, but on the other hand there were many accidents by which it might at any time be wholly lost. For all that they were so easy, the seats were very insecure, and at every sudden jolt of the coach persons were slipping out of them and falling to the ground, where they were instantly compelled to take hold of the rope and help to drag the coach on which they had before ridden so pleasantly. It was naturally regarded as a terrible misfortune to lose one's seat, and the apprehension that this might happen to them or their friends was a constant cloud upon the happiness of those who rode.[7]

The Inner City

As precarious as life was in nineteenth century America, it held out the promise of opportunity. The alternative to emigration from Europe was social stagnation or harassment.

> Do you know what it is to be born in Italy? You are a dog and you scratch in the earth like a dog to find a dirty bone for supper. You give eggs to the priest to save your soul, you slip the town clerk a bottle of wine merely to bandy words. When the padrone, the landowner, comes to spend the summer at his estate, all the village girls go to clean his

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[6]Frank Norris, The Pit, A Story of Chicago (New York: Grove Press, 1956), p. 64.

[7]Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward (New York: The Modern Library, 1951), pp. 3-4.

> house and fill it with flowers. He pays them with a smile and ungloves his knuckles for a kiss. And then a miracle. America. It was enough to make one believe in Jesus Christ.[8]
>
> Election Day was drawing near. The streets were alive with the banners, transparencies, window portraits of rival candidates, processions, fireworks, speeches. I heard scores of words from the political jargon of the country. I was continually asking questions, inquiring into the meaning of the things I saw or heard around me. Each day brought me new experiences, fresh impressions, keen sensations. An American day seemed to be far richer in substance than an Antomir year. I was in an everlasting flutter. I seemed to be panting for breath for the sheer speed with which I was rushing through life.[9]
>
> He spent a considerable sum on me. As we passed from block to block he kept saying, "Now you won't look green," or, "That will make you look American." At one point he added, "Not that you are a bad-looking fellow as it is, but then one must be presentable in America." At this he quoted from the Talmud an equivalent to the saying that one must do in Rome as the Romans do.
>
> When all our purchases had been made he took me to a barber shop with bathrooms in the rear.
>
> "Give him a hair-cut and a bath," he said to the proprietor. "Cut off his side-locks while you are at it. One may go without them and yet be a good Jew."[10]

Assimilation for many European immigrants led to social mobility. Although materialism was rewarding in the sense of personal gratification, there were those who were left behind and the feeling of ethnic solidarity was no longer guaranteed. Social fragmentation permeated not only into the ethnic community but into individual families as well.

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[8] Mario Puzo, The Fortunate Pilgrim (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965), p. 212.

[9] Abraham Cahan, The Rise of David Levirsky (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), p. 131.

[10] Ibid., p. 101.

> Marjorie was feeling optimistic, now that the banquet was upon her, and she had had a couple of glasses of champagne. She was even hoping that it might turn out to be fun. She had pictured the Goldstones as an island of pained superiority at one of the old-time family gatherings in the Bronx. But the flower-decked ballroom, the spacious dance floor, the waiters in blue mess jackets, the murmuring orchestra behind potted palms, the fine linen and silver on the tables, the camellias by each lady's plate, left nothing even for the Goldstones to desire. Her mother had arranged the seating perhaps cold-bloodedly, but with wisdom. Marjorie's table was on the favored side of the dance floor, where one saw nothing but stiff shirt fronts, black ties, pearl studs, and evening dresses. Here were her father's business associates, her mother's friends from fashionable charity organizations and a number of acquaintances gathered over a lifetime who had done well. On the other side of the dance floor were acquaintances who had not done so well; also her father's employees, and Bronx neighbors who were entitled to invitations for old times' sake, and the aunts, uncles, and cousins. Some of the guests on that side wore evening dresses too, but most of them were in street clothes. On the dais at the long rear wall of the ballroom, on either side of three vacant seats in the center, were several rabbis with their wives, and Assemblyman Feuer, Mr. Morgenstern's highest connection in the world, a red-faced little man with pince-nez glasses on a black ribbon. There was also Seth's one living grandparent, Mr. Morgenstern's mother, a tiny old lady who lived in New Jersey with Aunt Shosha, and who now looked bewildered and lost in a big gilt armchair.[11]

There were tribulations confronting European immigrants as they proceeded to make their way, with rapidity, into the mainstream of American society, but the barriers attempting to alter assimilation were not as formidable for them as they were for Negroes.

> This innocent country set you down in a ghetto in which, in fact, it intended that you should perish. Let me spell out precisely what I mean by that, for the heart of the matter is here, and the root of my dispute with my country. You were born where you were born and faced the future that you faced because you were black and for

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[11] Herman Wouk, Marjorie Morningstar (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1955), p. 72.

> no other reason. The limits of your ambition were, thus, expected to be set forever. You were born into a society which spelled out with brutal clarity, and in as many ways as possible, that you were a worthless human being. You were not expected to aspire to excellence: you were expected to make peace with mediocrity. Wherever you have turned, James, in your shor time on this earth, you have been told where you could go and what you could do (and how you could do it) and where you could live and whom you could marry. I know your countrymen do not agree with me about this, and I hear them saying, "You exaggerate." They do not know Harlem, and I do. So do you. Take no one's word for anything, including mine--but trust your experience. Know whence you came. If you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go.[12]

> "Crimes such as the Bigger Thomas murders could be lessened by segregating all Negroes in parks, playgrounds, cafes, theatres, and street cars. Residential segregation is imperative. Such measures tend to keep them as much as possible out of direct contact with white women and lessen their attacks against them.
>
> "We of the South believe that the North encourages Negroes to get more education than they are organically capable of absorbing, with the result that northern Negroes are generally more unhappy and restless than those of the South. If separate schools were maintained, it would be fairly easy to limit the Negroes' education by regulating the appropriation of moneys through city, county, and state legislative bodies.
>
> "Still another psychological deterrent can be attained by conditioning Negroes so that they have to pay deference to the white person with whom they come in contact. This is done by regulating their speech and actions. We have found that the injection of an element of constant fear has aided us greatly in handling the problem."[13]

Suburbia

In contrast to the squalor and struggle of the city, there was the ambiance of suburbia. In a society where making money was one's report in life, a residence in suburbia had the obvious connotations of success. Among the recipients of this distinction were individuals

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[12] James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1963), pp. 17-19.

[13] Richard Wright, Native Son (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), p. 261.

who appeared to be self-satisfied, but, inwardly, quite conscious of the fact that there were others who had achieved more. However, if one continued to apply himself to the task, the achievements of the trend setters could be equaled.

> As he approached the office he walked faster and faster, muttering, "Guess better hustle." All about him the city was hustling, for hustling's sake. Men in motors were hustling to pass one another in the hustling traffic. Men were hustling to catch trolleys, with another trolley a minute behind, and to leap from the trolleys, to gallop across the sidewalk, to hurl themselves into buildings, into hustling express elevators. Men in dairy lunches were hustling to gulp down the food which cooks had hustled to fry. Men in barber shops were snapping, "Jus' shave me once over. Gotta hustle." Men were feverishly getting rid of visitors in offices adorned with the signs, "This Is My Busy Day" and "The Lord Created the World in Six Days--You Can Spiel All You Got to Say in Six Minutes." Men who had made five thousand, year before last, and ten thousand last year, were urging on nerve-yelping bodies and parched brains so that they might make twenty thousand this year; and the men who had broken down immediately after making their twenty thousand dollars were hustling to catch trains, to hustle through the vacations which the hustling doctors had ordered.
>
> Among them Babbitt hustled back to his office, to sit down with nothing much to do except see that the staff looked as though they were hustling.[14]

> In Zenith it was as necessary for a Successful Man to belong to a country club as it was to wear a linen collar. Babbitt's was the Outing Golf and Country Club, a pleasant gray-shingled building with a broad porch, on a daisy-starred cliff above Lake Kennepoose. There was another, the Tonawanda Country Club, to which belonged Charles McKelvey, Horace Updike, and the other rich men who lunched not at the Athletic but at the Union Club. Babbitt explained with frequency, "You couldn't hire me to join the Tonawanda, even if I did have a hundred and eighty bucks to throw away on the initiation fee. At the Outing we've got a bunch of real human fellows, and the finest lot of little women in town--just as good at joshing as the men--but at the Tonawanda there's nothing but these would-be's in New York get-ups, drinking tea! Too much dog altogether. Why, I wouldn't join the Tonawanda even if they--I wouldn't join it on a bet!"[15]

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[14] Sinclair Lewis, Babbitt (New York: The New American Library, 1961), p. 128.

[15] Ibid., p. 129.

When I pulled up to the Patimkin house that night, everybody but Julie was waiting for me on the front porch: Mr. and Mrs., Ron, and Brenda, wearing a dress. I had not seen her in a dress before and for an instant she did not look like the same girl. But that was only half the surprise. So many of those Lincolnesque college girls turn out to be limbed for shorts alone. Not Brenda. She looked, in a dress, as though she'd gone through life so attired, as though she'd never worn shorts, or bathing suits, or pajamas, or anything but that pale linen dress. I walked rather bouncingly up the lawn, past the huge weeping willow, towards the waiting Patimkins, wishing all the while that I'd had my car washed. Before I'd even reached them, Ron stepped forward and shook my hand, vigorously, as though he hadn't seen me since the Diaspora. Mrs. Patimkin smiled and Mr. Patimkin grunted something and continued twitching his wrists before him, then raising an imaginary golf club and driving a ghost of a golf ball up and away towards the Orange Mountains, that are called Orange, I'm convinced, because in that various suburban light that's the only color they do not come dressed in.[16]

The rest of the basement, back of the wide pine-paneled room, was gray cement walls and linoleum floor and contained innumerable electrical appliances, including a freezer big enough to house a family of Eskimos. Beside the freezer, incongruously, was a tall old refrigerator; its ancient presence was a reminder to me of the Patimkin roots in Newark. This same refrigerator had once stood in the kitchen of an apartment in some four-family house, probably in the same neighborhood where I had lived all my life, first with my parents and then, when the two of them went wheezing off to Arizona, with my aunt and uncle. After Pearl Harbor the Kitchen and Bathroom Sinks had gone to war: no new barracks was complete until it had a squad of Patimkin sinks lined up in its latrine.[17]

I pulled the Volkswagen up in front of a huge garage door that said across the front of it:

PATIMKIN KITCHEN AND BATHROOM SINKS
"Any Size--Any Shape"

Inside I could see a glass-enclosed office; it was in the center of an immense warehouse. Two trucks were being loaded in the rear, and Mr. Patimkin, when I saw him, had a cigar in his mouth and was shouting at someone. It was Ron, who was wearing a white T-shirt that said Ohio State Athletic Association across the front. Though he was taller than Mr. Patimkin, and almost as stout, his hands hung

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[16]Philip Roth, Goodbye, Columbus (New York: Bantam Books, 1963), p. 29.

[17]Ibid., p. 30.

> weakly at his sides like a small boy's; Mr. Patimkin's cigar locomoted in his mouth. Six Negroes were loading one of the trucks feverishly, tossing--my stomach dropped--sink bowls at one another.[18]

Rural

The suburban landscape expanded in response to the intensification of urban decentralization. The expansion of suburbia into farmland adjacent to the city was not the solitary factor contributing to the demise of the small farmer in American society. The growth of urbanization in the twentieth century necessitated the increased application of agrarian technology. The demand for increased economy of scales in America's agricultural industry was forcing many small farmers, not all of them being incompetent, off of the land. America's rural landscape is a contrast between poverty and prosperity. Farmers were not only battling nature's elements but social and economic conditions as well. There were those who survived because they were pragmatic and there were those who suffered because they were obstinate.

> In front of the blackboard, upon a platform, a young man in shirt-sleeves, his cuffs caught up by metal clamps, walked up and down. Screwed to the blackboard itself was a telegraph instrument, and from time to time, as this buzzed and ticked, the young man chalked up cabalistic, and almost illegible figures under columns headed by initials of certain stocks and bonds, or by the words "Pork," "Oats," or, larger than all the others, "May Wheat." The air of the room was stale, close, and heavy with tobacco fumes. The only noises were the low hum of conversations, the unsteady click of the telegraph key, and the tapping of the chalk in the marker's fingers.[19]

> The plowing, thus commenced, continued. The sun rose higher. Steadily the hundred iron hands kneaded and furrowed and stroked the brown, humid earth; the hundred iron teeth bit deep into the Titan's flesh. Perched on his seat, the moist, living reins slipping and tugging in his hands, Vanamee,

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[18] Ibid., p. 65.

[19] Frank Norris, p. 82.

> in the midst of this steady confusion of constantly varying sensation, sight interrupted by sound, sound mingling with sight, on this swaying, vibrating seat, quivering with the prolonged thrill of the earth, lapsed to a sort of pleasing numbness, in a sense, hypnotized by the weaving maze of things in which he found himself involved. To keep his team at an even, regular gait, maintaining the precise interval, to run the plow in front--this for the moment was the entire sum of his duties. But while one part of his brain, alert and watchful, took cognizance of these matters, all the greater part was lulled and stupefied with the long monotony of the affair.[20]

> Jeeter could never think of the loss of his land and goods as anything but a man-made calamity. He sometimes said it was partly his own fault, but he believed steadfastly that his position had been brought about by other people. He did not blame Captain John to the same extent that he blamed others, however. Captain John had always treated him fairly and had done more for him than any other man. When Jeeter had over-bought at the stores in Fuller, Captain John let him continue, and he never put a limit to the credit allowed. But the end soon came. There was no longer any profit in raising cotton under the Captain's antiquated system, and he abandoned the farm and moved to Augusta. Rather than attempt to show his tenants how to conform to the newer and more economical methods of modern agriculture, which he thought would have been an impossible task from the start, he sold the stock and implements and moved away. An intelligent employment of his land, stocks, and implements would have enabled Jeeter, and scores of others who had become dependent upon Captain John, to raise crops for food, and crops to be sold at a profit. Co-operative and corporate farming would have saved them all.[21]

> July came on with the breathless, brilliant heat which makes the plains of Kansas and Nebraska the best corn country in the world. It seemed as if we could hear the corn growing in the night; under the stars one caught a faint crackling in the dewy, heavy-odoured cornfields where the feathered stalks stood so juicy and green. If all the great plain from the Missouri to the Rocky Mountains had been under glass, and the heat regulated by a thermometer, it could not have been better for the yellow tassels that were ripening and fertilizing the silk day by day. The cornfields were far apart in those times, with miles of wild grazing land between. It took a clear, meditative eye like my grandfather's to foresee that they would enlarge and multiply until they would be, not the

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[20] Frank Norris, p. 95.

[21] Erskine Caldwell, Tobacco Road (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1974), pp. 63-64.

> Shimerdas' cornfields, or Mr. Busby's, but the world's cornfields; that their yield would be one of the great economic facts, like the wheat crop of Russia, which underlie all the activities of men in peace and war.[22]

> The people came out of their houses and smelled the hot stinging air and covered their noses from it. And the children came out of the houses, but they did not run or shout as would have done after a rain. Men stood by their fences and looked at the ruined corn, drying fast now, only a little green showing through the film of dust. The men were silent and they did not move often. And the women came out of the houses to stand beside their men--to feel whether this time the men would break. The women studied the men's faces secretly, for the corn could go, as long as something else remained. The children stood near by, drawing figures in the dust with bare toes, and the children sent exploring senses out to see whether men and women would break. The children peeked at the faces of the men and women, and then drew careful lines in the dust with their toes. Horses came to the watering troughs and nuzzled the water to clear the surface dust. After a while the faces of the watching men lost their bemused perplexity and became hard and angry and resistant. Then the women knew that they were safe and that there was no break. Then they asked, What'll we do? And the men replied, I don't know. But it was all right. The women knew it was all right, and the watching children knew it was all right. Women and children knew it was all right. Women and children knew deep in themselves that no misfortune was too great to bear if their men were whole. The women went into the houses to their work and the children began to play, but cautiously at first. As the day went forward the sun became less red. It flared down on the dust-blanketed land. The men sat in the doorways of their houses; their hands were busy with sticks and little rocks. The men sat still--thinking--figuring.[23]

The Small Town

After the tabulation of the 1920 Federal Census, the nation's demographers concluded that, for the first time in America s history, a greater proportion of the country's population living in urban places exceeded those dwelling in rural areas. In the context of change processes, this phenomena does have spatial implications. There is

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[22]Willa Cather, My Antonia (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954), p. 137.

[23]John Steinbeck, p. 3.

now a dichotomy between the city and the small town.

Urbanization implies a more cosmopolitanistic way of living while the prevalance of localism in the small town contributes to provincialism. Simplicity in the small town milieu suggests a stronger sense of community. It is a place where "everybody knows your name." In contrast, urban complexity implies anonymity. While urbanization reflects a secular outlook upon perspectives, the persistence of conservativism and the dominance of traditionalsim in the small town suggests a stifling of creativity; thus, the existence of a paradox. Either a small town was a place of contentment where one willingly accepted the regime of life, or it was a place of unfulfilled dreams and rather than tolerate the resulting frustrations, one took the first opportunity to leave.

> Now the train was passing the elevator, the grim storage-tanks for oil, a creamery, a lumber-yard, a stock-yard muddy and trampled and stinking. Now they were stopping at a squat red frame station, the platform crowded with unshaven farmers and with loafers--unadventurous people with dead eyes. She was here. She could not go on. It was the end--the end of the world. She sat with closed eyes, longing to push past Kennicott, hide somewhere in the train, flee on toward the Pacific.[24]

> Alice dropped to the ground and lay trembling. She was so frightened at the thought of what she had done that when the man had gone on his way she did not dare get to her feet, but crawled on hands and knees through the grass to the house. When she got to her own room she bolted the door and drew her dressing table across the doorway. Her body shook as with a chill and her hands trembled so that she had difficulty getting into her nightdress. When she got into bed she buried her face in the pillow and wept brokenheartedly. "What is the matter with me? I will do something dreadful if I am not careful," she thought, and turning her face to the wall, began trying to force herself to face bravely the fact that many people must live and die alone, even in Winesburg.[25]

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[24]Sinclair Lewis, Main Street (New York: New American Library, 1961), p. 31.

[25]Sherwood Anderson, Winesburg, Ohio (New York: The Viking Press, 1960), p. 120.

> Her active hatred of Gopher Prairie had run out. She saw it now as a toiling new settlement. With sympathy she remembered Kennicott's defense of its citizens as "a lot of pretty good folks, working hard and trying to bring up their families the best they can." She recalled tenderly the young awkwardness of Main Street and the makeshifts of the little brown cottages; she pitied their shabbiness and isolation; had compassion for their assertion of culture, even as expressed in Thanatopsis papers, for their pretense of greatness, even as trumpeted in "boosting." She saw Main Street in the dusty prairie sunset, a line of frontier shanties with solemn lonely people waiting for her, solemn and lonely as an old man who has outlived his friends. She remembered that Kennicott and Sam Clark had listened to her songs, and she wanted to run to them and sing.
>
> "At last," she rejoiced, "I've come to a fairer attitude toward the town. I can love it now."[26]

> He thought of little things--Turk Smollet wheeling boards through the main street of his town in the morning, a tall woman, beautifully gowned, who had once stayed overnight at his father's hotel, Butch Wheeler the lamp lighter of Winesburg hurrying through the streets on a summer evening and holding a torch in his hand, Helen White standing by a window in the Winesburg post office and putting a stamp on an envelope.
>
> The young man's mind was carried away by his growing passion for dreams. One looking at him would not have thought him particularly sharp. With the recollection of little things occupying his mind he closed his eyes and leaned back in the car seat. He stayed that way for a long time and when he aroused himself and again looked out of the car window the town of Winesburg had desappeared and his life there had become but a background on which to paint the dreams of his manhood.[27]

The Frontier

The transformation of the American wilderness into expansive farms and ranches addresses itself to a multiplicity of change processes. Although there were several frontier throughout America's history, the Prairie Frontier has been selected as an example because of the brevity of its existence and the accelerated intensity of

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[26] Sinclair Lewis, pp. 424-425.

[27] Sherwood Anderson, p. 247.

industrial technology.

> Early next morning I ran out-of-doors to look about me. I had been told that ours was the only wooden house west of Black Hawk--until you came to the Norwegian settlement, where there were several. Our neighbours lived in sod houses and dugouts--comfortable, but not very roomy. Our white frame house, with a story and half-story above the basement, stood at the east end of what I might call the farmyard, with the windmill close by the kitchen door. From the windmill the ground sloped westward, down to the barns and granaries and pig-yards. This slope was trampled hard and bare, and washed out in winding gullies by the rain. Beyond the corncribs, at the bottom of the shallow draw, was a muddy little pond, with rusty willow bushes growing about it. The road from the post-office came directly by our door, crossed the farmyard, and curved round this little pond, beyond which it began to climb the gentle swell of unbroken prairie to the west. There along the western sky-line it skirted a great cornfield, much larger than any field I had ever seen. This cornfield and the sorghum patch behind the barn, were the only broken land in sight. Everywhere, as far as the eye could reach, there was nothing but rough, shaggy, red grass, most of it as tall as I.[28]

> There were the sounds of the hammer and the saw, the rattle of chains, the thud of hoofs, all very sharp and distinct, as though this mushroom town were pulling itself out of the red clay of the prairie by its own boot straps before one's eyes. Crude and ugly though the scene was that now spread itself before Sabra and Yancey, it still was not squalid. It had vitality. You sensed that behind those bare boards people were planning and stirring mightily. There was life in the feel of it. The very names tacked up over the store fronts had a bite and sting. Sam Pack. Mott Bixler. Strap Buckner. Ike Hawes. Clint Hopper. Jim Click.
>
> It struck Sabra suddenly with a little shock of discovery that the men really were doing nothing. They lounged in doorways and against hitching posts and talked; you heard their voices in animated conversation within saloon and store and office; they cantered by gracefully, and wheeled and whirled and cantered back again. She was to learn that many of these men were not builders but scavengers. The indomitable old '49ers were no kin of these. They were frequently soft, cruel, furtive, and avaricious. They had gathered here to pick up what they could and move on. Some were cowmen, full of resentment against a government that had taken the

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[28] Willa Cather, p. 137.

free range away from them and given it over to the homesteaders. Deprived of their only occupation, many of these became outlaws. Equipped with six-shooters, a deadly aim, and horsemanship that amounted to the miraculous, they took to the Gyp Hills or the Osage, swooping down from their hidden haunts to terrorize a town, shoot up a bank, hold up a train, and dash out again, leaving blood behind them. They risked their lives for a few hundred dollars. Here was a vast domain without laws, without the customs of civilization; part of a great country, yet no part of its government. Here a horse was more valuable than a human life. A horse thief, caught, was summarily hanged to the nearest tree; the killer of a man often went free.[29]

The Osage reservation was that nearest the town of Osage. There now was some talk of changing the name of the town because of this, but it was never done. It had been named in the rush of the Run. The Osages, unlike many of the other Territory Plains tribes, were a handsome people--tall broad shouldered, proud. The women carried themselves well, head up, shoulders firm, their step leisurely and light. Their garments were mean enough, but over them they wore the striped blanket of the tribe, orange and purple and scarlet and blue, dyed with the same brilliant lasting dyes that Mother Bridget had used in Sabra's coverlet. They came in from the Reservation on foot; sometimes a family rattled along the red clay road that led into town, huddled in a wagon, rickety, mud spattered. Sometimes a buck rode a scrofulous horse, his lean legs hugging its sorry flanks. The town treated them with less consideration than the mongrel curs that sunned themselves in the road. They bought their meager supplies with the stipend that the government allowed them; the men bought, stole or begged whisky when they could, though fire water was strictly forbidden them, and to sell or give it to an Indian was a criminal offense. They lolled or squatted in the sun. They would not work. They raised a little corn which, mixed with lye, they called soffica. This mess, hot or cold, was eaten with a spoon made from the horn of a cow.[30]

The daughters of Black Hawk merchants had a confident, unenquiring belief that they were 'refined,' and that the country girls, who 'worked out' were not. The American farmers in our county were quite as hardpressed as their neighbours from other counties. All alike had come to Nebraska with little capital and no knowledge of the soil they must subdue. All had borrowed money on their land. But no matter in what straits the Pennsylvanian or Virginian found himself, he would not let his daughters go out into service. Unless his girls could teach a country school, they sat at home in poverty.

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[29] Edna Ferber, Cimarron (Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday & Company, 1929), pp. 86-88.

[30] Ibid., pp. 164-165.

> The Bohemian and Scandinavian girls could not get positions as teachers, because they had had no opportunity to learn the language. Determined to help in the struggle to clear the homestead from debt, they had no alternative but to go into service. Some of them, after they came remained as serious and as discreet in behaviour as they had been when they ploughed and herded on their father's farm. Others, like the three Bohemian Marys, tried to make up for the years of youth they had lost. But every one of them did what she had set out to do, and sent home those hard-earned dollars. The girls I knew were always helping to pay for ploughs and reapers, brood-sows, or steers to fatten.
>
> One result of this family solidarity was that the foreign farmers in our county were the first to become prosperous. After the fathers were out of debt, the daughters married the sons of neighbours--usually of like nationality--and the girls who once worked in Black Hawk kitchens are today managing big farms and fine families of their own; their children are better off than the children of the town women they used to serve.[31]

Conclusion

The applicability of employing novels as a pedagogical technique in the teaching of landscape evolution is practical in the sense that it gives the student of geography an opportunity to expand her inductive perceptibility with regards to the study of man-land relationships. Novels take one beyond the mere description of esoterica. Whether a cultural geography course has been organized around either a regional or topical format, fictional literature does have its usefulness. When compared with anthropology or sociology, geographers most often conduct their studys on a level of scale that appears to subvert the individual at the expense of the regional area. This problem of scale can be circumvented because the novel helps one to visualize how particular groups or individuals respond to a given set of circumstances within a place in a set period of time.

The suggestions for using fictional literature offered in this paper are being made within the parameters of the two-year community

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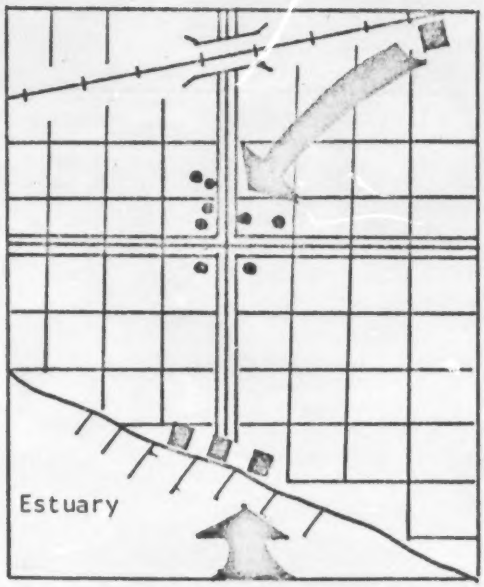
[31]Willa Cather, pp. 199-200.

college situation. Of course, any teacher who has a predilection for using novels must be cognizant of the variation in student abilities. The sophistication of this methodology suggest that the appreaction of its technique will be commensurate with the ability of the student. This, although no proof is being offered here to the contrary, need not and should not be so. The final test of its practicality rests with the imagination and aptitude of the classroom teacher.

The novels selected for this paper have both historical as well as literary significance. It would seem, to this writer, that the novelist has a greater degree of bias than the social scientist (human geographer) who should have none at all. This begs the question of the novel's validity. How does any particular novel corelate with reality? This inquiry should not be ignored and if dealt with correctly, should stimulate further student enthusiasm for cultural geography. Finally, novels, by themselves, will not make cultural geography courses viable. They must be appropriately employed upon a conceptual foundation that has obvious spatial connotations. Such a conceptual framework is offered through illustrations in the remaining pages of this paper.

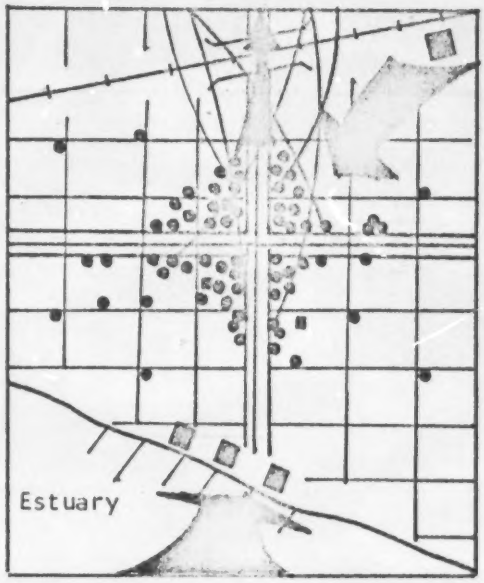
THE ECOLOGICAL MORPHOLOGY OF AN ETHNIC COMMUNITY

ARRIVAL



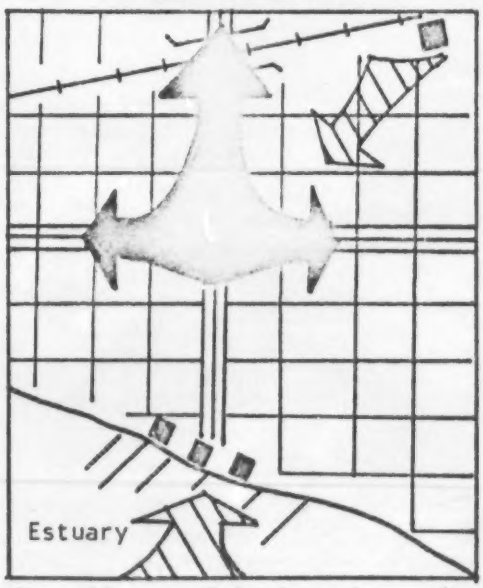
Initial settlement of ethnic group along trolley thoroughfares. Immigrants occupy abandoned housing stock. Population density increases. Process of assimilation begins and opportunists emerge as influential members of the community.

ASSIMILATION



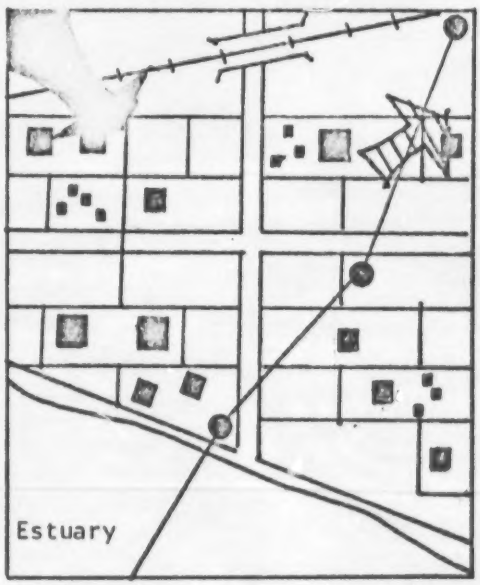
Ethnic group expands as a result of continued immigration. Some of the more prosperous members relocate to better neighborhoods. Others will maintain places of business in old neighborhood. Assimilation alters ethnic traditions.

SOCIAL MOBILITY



Curtailment of immigration reduces in-migration into the community. Assimilation and subsequent social mobility generates relocation into better neighborhoods. Rural migrants displace former residents.

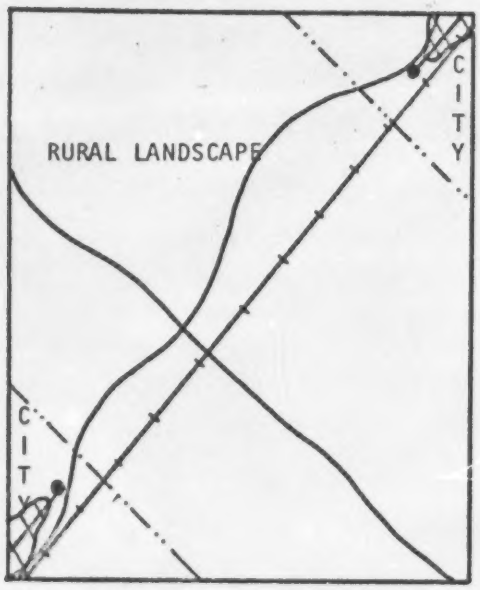
DISPLACEMENT



Trolley lines are replaced by mass transit systems. Old housing stock is demolished and street patterns are redesigned into "super blocks." Affluent cosmopolites move into condominiums as poor are displaced.

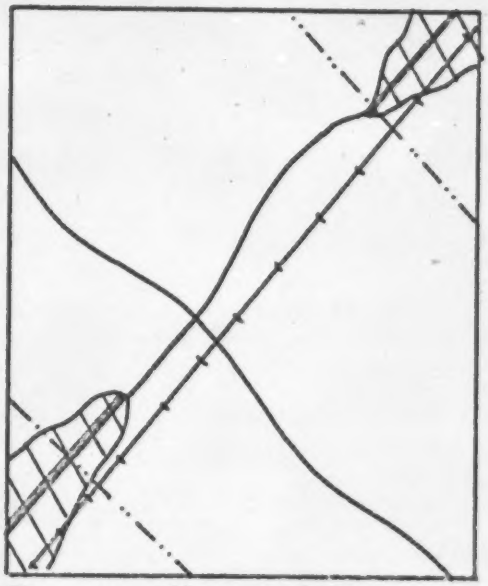
THE EVOLUTION OF SUBURBIA

THE TROLLEY CAR



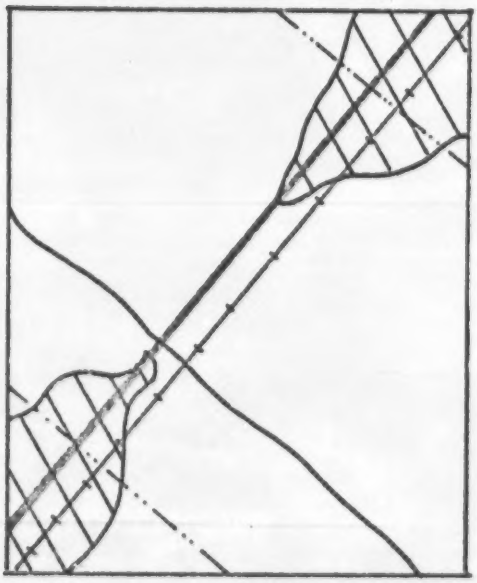
The emergence of proletariat neighborhoods in the city generated an outward movement of the bourgeois class into the urban periphery. Residential communities are constructed along fixed lines of accessibility.

EARLY AUTOMOBILE



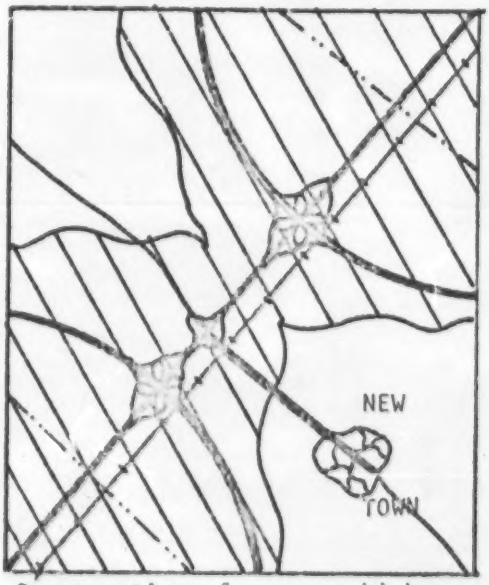
The automobile, providing a more flexible means of transportation, accelerates decentralization. Status conscience suburbanites conform to norms that revolve around varying degrees of exclusivity.

POST WAR DECENTRALIZATION



Affluence generated by the post war economy makes suburbia more accessible. Exclusivity is exacerbated as racism keeps affluent black families in the city.

INTERSTATE NETWORK

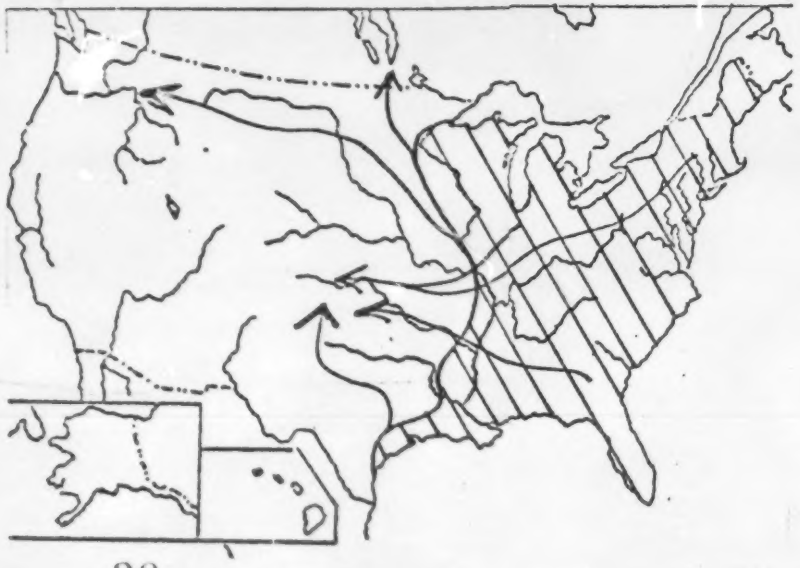


Construction of a super highway network with urban circumferentials transforms the rural landscape into almost nondistinctive residential communities. Older suburbia becomes the new urban blight. New towns are the ecological ideal.

INTERNAL MIGRATION

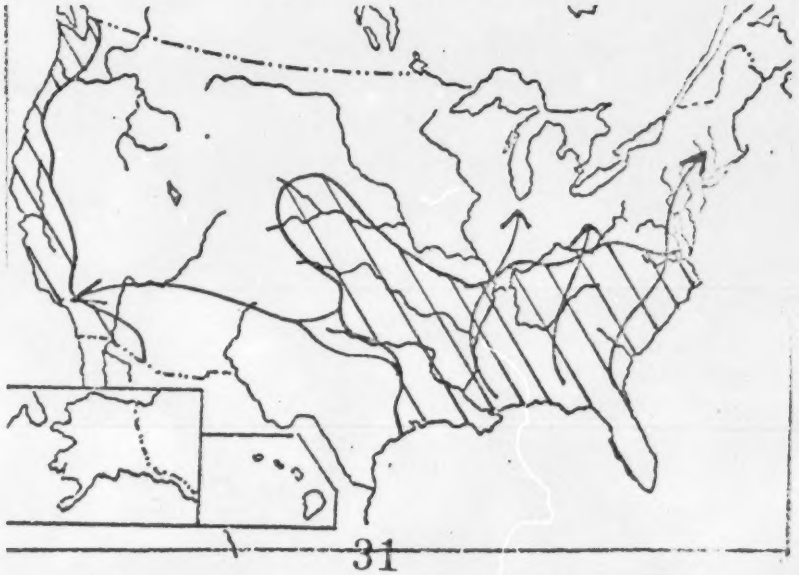
THE TRANSAPPALACHIAN FRONTIER

THE PRAIRIE FRONTIER



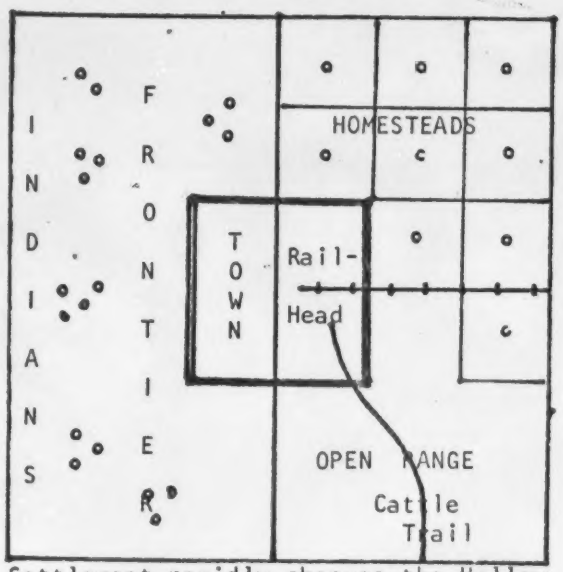
THE TRANSMISSISSIPPIAN FRONTIER

THE URBAN FRONTIER



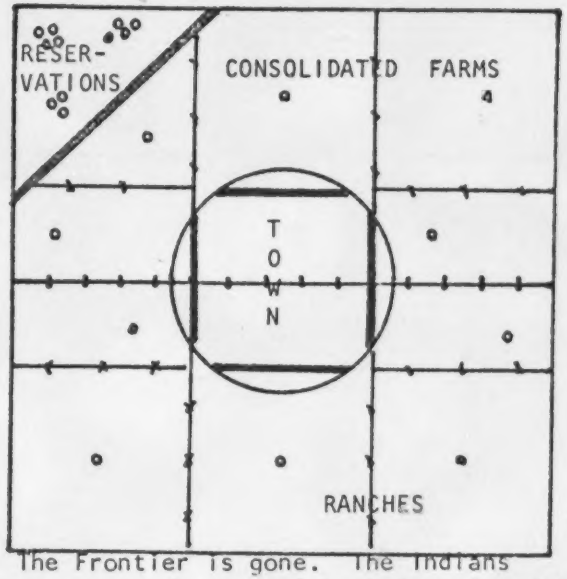
THE EVOLUTION OF A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN THE PRAIRIE REGION

THE AGRARIAN FRONTIER



Settlement rapidly changes the Hollow Frontier into the Agrarian Frontier. Junction of Cattle Trail and Railroad generates development of a town. Indian attempt unsuccessfully to prevent encroachment. Some social amenities slowly emerge in the town. Open range is consumed by organized farming and ranching. Wheat emerges as the dominant crop. The railroad monopoly begins to dominate the economic landscape.

THE DOMISTICATED WILDERNESS



The Frontier is gone. The Indians are assured survival by being placed in "open air concentration camps." Economic exigencies force small farmers off of the land and persistent farmers expand holdings thus forming more efficient units. Cowboys evolve, not too willingly, into herders on ranches. Rough edges of the town community are polished as social amenities continue to expand. The region has become politically and economically dominated by the East. The rise of Populism attempts to reassert democratic institutions

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